

Appl. No. 09/992,712

Reply to Office Action of October 9, 2003

REMARKS**Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103**

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Klatt et al. (US 6,097,605) in view of Saito et al (US 6,402,529), Schmidt et al. (US 5,901,049), Itou et al. (US 6,010,066) and Seeley et al (US 6,132,223).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. The applied references fail to disclose or suggest the inventions defined by Applicants' claims, and provide no teaching that would have suggested the desirability of modification to arrive at the claimed invention.

Applicants' claim 1 is directed to an apparatus capable of receiving four different types of memory cards within a single slot. Applicants' claim 1 reads as follows:

1. An apparatus comprising:

a housing defining a slot to receive one of a plurality of types of removable memory cards, wherein the slot includes a central region of at least a height and a width to receive an entire memory card selected from a set comprising at least three different types of memory cards of at least two different widths and outer regions of a second height that extend the central region to a width to receive a memory card of a fourth type; and

a plurality of electrically conductive contact areas arranged within the housing to provide electrical contact with the different types memory cards.

With respect to claim 1, the cited references fail to teach or suggest numerous elements. For example, none of the cited references teach or suggest a housing defining a slot having a central region to receive a memory card selected from a set of at least three different types of memory cards of at least two different widths. Moreover, none of the cited references teach or suggest a slot having outer regions of a second height that extend the central region to a width to receive a memory card of a fourth type. In fact, none of the references teach an apparatus having a slot for receiving four different types of memory cards at all.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner primarily relies on Klatt et al., and cites column 5, lines 54-57, which reads as follows:

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Furthermore, at the top side 23 of the housing 5 four card receiving means 24 are arranged in a row which allows for a slanted introduction of multimedia cards according to the known SIMM technology (emphasis added).

Contrary to the requirements of Applicants' claim 1, Klatt describes receiving four memory cards of the same type. Moreover, this portion of Klatt is describing a contacting unit having four SIMMS for receiving four multimedia cards (MMCs) simultaneously. Applicants refer the Examiner to receiving means 24 of Figure 3. Not only are the four multimedia cards the same type of memory card, the contact unit of Klatt does not receive them via a single slot.

In its entirety, Klatt mentions only two different formats of memory cards: (1) multimedia cards (MMCs), and (2) ISO 7816 chip cards (also known as Smart Cards or Smart Media). Thus, not only does Klatt fail to teach or suggest a single slot capable of receiving four different types of memory cards, but Klatt does not even describe a device capable of receiving four different types of memory cards whatsoever.

All of the other references fail in this regard. Saito, for example, describes a card connector capable of receiving at most three different types of memory cards. See, e.g., Figure 4 of Saito as referred to by the Examiner. In particular, Saito describes a connector for receiving: (1) a "thin type" card illustrated by Saito as a "Smart Media," (2) a "1-stage thickness type" card illustrated by Saito as an MMC type of memory card, and (3) a 2-stage thickness type of card illustrated by Saito as a "Secure Digital" type of memory card. None of the other references of record teach or suggest an apparatus having a single slot for receiving four different types of memory cards. Moreover, even in combination, Klatt and Saito describe a total of only three different types of memory cards.

Claims 2-14 are allowable for at least the reasons set forth above. For at least these reasons, the Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case for non-patentability of Applicants' claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

CONCLUSION

All claims in this application are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and prompt allowance of all pending claims. Please charge any additional

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fees or credit any overpayment to deposit account number 09-0069. The Examiner is invited to telephone the below-signed attorney to discuss this application.

Date:

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Imation Legal Affairs

P.O. Box 64898

St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0898

Telephone: (651) 704-3604

Facsimile: (651) 704-5951

By:



Name: Eric D. Levinson

Reg. No.: 35,814